

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

290834Z Jul 05

ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DS-00
	EAP-00	EUR-00	VC-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	VCE-00	NRC-00	NSAE-00	OES-00	OIC-00	PA-00	GIWI-00
	FMPC-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00	SCRS-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00
	DRL-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/000W	
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8672
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY ABUJA
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
NSC WASHDC
USEU BRUSSELS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 001038

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR B. NEULING
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR C. COURVILLE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2010
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: GOZ CONTINUES ATTACK ON MUNICIPALITIES

REF: A. HARARE 944

- [1](#)B. 2004 HARARE 2035
- [1](#)C. 2004 HARARE 682

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i., Eric T. Schultz under Section 1
.4 b/d

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) The GOZ suspended the MDC mayor of Mutare on July 22, ostensibly for misusing public funds. However, the mayor told us July 28 that showing the UN Special Envoy the areas of Mutare affected by Operation Restore Order was the real reason for his suspension. Meanwhile, the GOZ ordered restored to his position a town clerk dismissed for embezzlement by the MDC-led council of Chitungwiza. Chitungwiza,s mayor told us he expected to hear news of his own suspension in the near future. End Summary.

Mutare Mayor Suspended

[1](#)2. (C) The GOZ announced the suspension of MDC Mayor of Mutare M.T. Kagurabadza at a national conference for chiefs on July 22. According to the July 27 edition of government-sponsored Herald newspaper, Local Government Minister Ignatius Chombo suspended Kagurabadza and other top officials on the MDC-dominated Mutare council for misusing public funds. The Herald article quoted Local Government Deputy Secretary Jacob Chikuruwo that Kagurabadza had borrowed funds to purchase two garbage vehicles and a Mercedes Benz for himself without authority from the Ministry to seek the loans.

[1](#)3. (C) On July 28, Kagurabadza told poloff the real reason for his suspension was for showing UN Special Envoy Anna Tibaijuka the living conditions in the high-density suburb of Sakubva, where tens of thousands were displaced after the GOZ,s Operation Restore Order (ref A), before the GOZ could clear the area out. Kagurabadza said the council did purchase four garbage vehicles, three ambulances, and five trucks for use by council members in carrying out their duties but that they did so under a lease to buy agreement and did not require the authority of the Ministry to do so. He said that Mutare had had no garbage trucks or ambulances at all before the MDC-dominated council took office.

[1](#)4. (C) On July 26, the Herald reported a demonstration of about 100 residents of Mutare calling on the Government to fire the entire council. Kagurabadza said the demonstrators were not residents of Mutare but rather people brought in by the Government specifically for the purpose of demonstrating against the council. The residents of Mutare did not oppose

him or the council because they knew what their elected officials had done for the city.

Chitungwiza Mayor at Risk

15. (C) On July 25, the Daily Mirror newspaper reported that Chombo had reinstated Chitungwiza town clerk Simbarashe Mudunge, whom the MDC-led Chitungwiza council had suspended for misuse of funds intended for a sewer project. Chombo declared the allegations baseless and said the council had no authority to suspend Mudunge. MDC mayor of Chitungwiza Misheck Shoko told the Embassy's cultural officer on July 25 that he expected to hear news of his own suspension or firing any day for daring to suspend a town clerk favored by Chombo. Shoko seemed resigned to the probability of his impending removal from office and expressed no confidence in the legal system as a means of fighting it.

Comment

16. (C) These actions by the Ministry of Local Government continue a pattern of GOZ interference with MDC-led municipal governments, the most notable of which was the firing of the MDC mayor of Harare, Elias Mudzuri, and several of the MDC council members and appointment of a commission to run Harare in 2004 (ref B). The ruling party has had it in for Kagurabadza for some time; it engineered a lengthy siege of his office last year in an attempt to drive him from office (ref C). It has also staged disruptive demonstrations against and tried to bribe other MDC mayors. The GOZ has also denied fair pay to many MDC mayors (capping the Kariba mayor's pay at less than US\$100 month, for example) and systematically denied sustainable municipal rate structures in most MDC-controlled cities. The municipal level has been the one level where the MDC has been effective in getting leaders elected and the Government has missed no opportunity to thwart the effectiveness of the opposition's elected officials.
SCHULTZ

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